

Got A Chain Letter—You're In Trouble

Chain letter buyers and sellers, you have had it! No matter what you have been told, or told your prospective customers, chain letters are definitely illegal according to postal authorities here in Lincoln.

J. A. Bradley, postal inspector, says that even mailing of money only, supposedly the panacea which made the letters legal, is in violation of Federal statutes.

Chain letters are in violation of postal regulations generally titled the fraud statute and the lottery statute. The former regulation, cited by postal authorities is actually 62 Stat. 763; 18 USC 1342 which calls for a \$1000 fine or 5 years imprisonment or both for violation. Bradley explained that mailing only money did not constitute a legal operation, rather sending cash merely completed the fraud.

Actually, chain letters have been declared unmaillable material by the Post Office solicitor in Washington, D.C. Violators are prosecuted by United States Attorneys. Mailing only money does not offer a legal way around the postal regulations because of the completing a fraud interpretations of such an act by the solicitor.

On the local level, postal authorities have outlined their plans to combat the spread and operation of chain letters as a three-fold program. First, postal clerks, many of whom are expert at detecting suspicious letters which might include the "payoff" have been noting the names and numbers of the addressees on such letters. In some cases, where the payoff letter traffic is particularly heavy to one individual, letters are held up in the post office.

Second, postal inspectors make their investigations of suspicious letters. In cases where the letter is held up Inspector Bradley noted, the addressee is called into the office and asked to open the letter in the presence of the investigating officer. Should the letter contain a bona fide message, nothing further is said; should the letter contain a payoff (usually a \$5 bill), questioning begins in an effort to trace the letter back to its source.

Third, an affidavit of statements concerning the letters containing payoffs is sent to a U.S. Attorney's office where the decision of whether or not to prosecute for the violation of postal regulations is made. A check with the U.S. Attorney in Lincoln showed the matter is being investigated at the present time, and a decision

about the legality of recent chain letters will be reached soon.

Thus far, the postal authorities have been slow to take action on persons taking part in chain letters. Inspector Bradley noted that chain letters and similar money making schemes are frauds or considered fraudulent because there is no certainty of return on the money invested. Also fake letters, name substituting and cheating on payments are common. He added that chain letters usually fall of their own weight because of the huge numbers of persons required to make the proposition profitable for anyone involved.

To date, there have been no complaints to the postal officers about chain letters. However, the most recent craze seems to be made of more durable stuff than those before. Bradley said the situation now is more serious and the postal authorities plan to take action.

It is a matter of common knowledge that many University students have taken part in chain letter schemes, some thinking the hand-to-hand method of moving the letter itself made the scheme legal since nothing but money was actually sent through the mail. It has been shown that merely mailing payoff money through the mails is a serious offense which might easily result in stiff penalties for those involved.

Inspector Bradley advised that persons involved in chain letters do what they can to have their names removed from the list.

Up to now, chain letters have been little more than a source of amusement to college students. Few of those students taking part actually expected to hit the pot-of-gold supposedly just around the corner. An even smaller minority really knew they were involving themselves in something so strongly illegal or in something which might have such disastrous effects should enforcement agencies care to prosecute.

All that has saved many persons from being prosecuted in the past has been the large numbers of persons involved. Prosecution was also not undertaken because the chains were comparatively short-lived. However, the 1954 version is hanging on—the postal authorities do not like this and have promised action against chain letters. They might bring pressure to bear which will result in serious consequences to those who become the examples intended to break the chains once and for all.—T. W.

When Philosophies Collide

The uproar in Nebraska concerning the debate topic chosen for 1954-55, "Resolved: That the United States Should Extend Diplomatic Recognition to the Communist Government of China," smacks of good old Nebraska conservatism. It surprised many resigned conservatives who believe universities and colleges are infested with liberals and that liberalism breeds among the "intellectuals."

Dr. Herbert Cushing departed from this theory with his announcement that Kearney State Teachers College, of which he is president, would not debate the national debate topic because it is "trying to indoctrinate a few thousand American college youths with what I consider to be a dangerous philosophy." The fact that other Nebraska colleges took a similar position indicates that there is either a widespread agreement with Dr. Cushing or that the strength of Dr. Cushing's pronouncement carried the sentiments of a silent citizenry which additional prodding might make scathingly vocal.

The position these schools have taken on the debate question has been applauded by some as "protection from indoctrination" and criticized by others as a violation of "academic freedom"—that often used obscure term.

Many consider the colleges unjust in their refusal to hold an investigative debate on the Red China question saying that this is suppression of free speech, education and censorship. Supporters of Dr. Cushing argue that the question, so important in United States foreign policy, has no debatable content because the United States has already decided what its position concerning Red China will be. They also argue that the question, if exploited, would endanger the patriotic thinking of America's college youths in that it is too close to the Communist ideology to ever be debated in the affirmative without some adverse effect on the debator—regardless of the fact that he must also debate the negative side of the question.

The debate topic is obviously a loaded one and justifiably so. But it must be realized even by Cushing that there are some loyal Americans—totally anti-Communist—who feel that Red China should be recognized for the good of the U.S.

It must also be realized that there are people who firmly believe that the Red China issue is a closed one; that we recognized a Communist government once and are now paying dearly for it; that Red China, how it came to be and what it now is, is against everything that America stands for. To these people there is no question.

But beneath all this conservatism and liberal quibbling lies a psychological factor which seems to have escaped notice. The American public—at least in Nebraska—is not ready or willing to have any subject debated openly which may possibly present the merits of a government embodying Communism, anti-democratic philosophies and anti-capitalism—words which have bombarded the American people since the 1920's. Red China connotes all these and more and it is difficult for Americans to see the separation between Red China as a nation and Red China as a revolutionary, Com-

munist way of life. The memories of American newspapers reporting Communist infiltration into the government, Congress' outlaw of the Communist party, the restriction through suspicion of Oppenheimer and the obvious refusal to recognize Red China or admit her to the United Nations have fostered an atmosphere of defensive condemnation of a too liberal approach to Communism in any form. The American people have been propagandized to the point that their objectivity on matters dealing with Communism has been impaired.

If a student were to debate this question in the affirmative and if he were to win that debate on the basis that he presented a stronger and more logical argument than did the negative side, is there a chance that somewhere in the far recesses of society that student would be called a "pink" or regarded as having too liberal opinions for the good of the country. This is highly theoretic but it is not too far from being plausible.

Would such a debate victory place the student on the F.B.I. list of those persons who have expressed opinions adverse to the American way of life and have upheld a position opposite to that of the United States government's policy. Probably the liberals would tear their hair at this reasoning but it is all too true that a stigma does exist and that society would use this stigma to cast off those who would voice a too well prepared defense of Communism. Society acts not only consciously but subconsciously and it is society's subconscious that often runs illogically rampant.

Defenders of the debate choice say that the question could only be debated on the legal aspects of the recognition of Red China. Critics hold that the moral aspects far overshadow the legal points and the moral issue has already been decided.

Freedom of education, investigation then judging, freedom to think for oneself and to form an opinion based on knowledge has always been American. It seems strange that those who cry loudest for "academic freedom" insist on putting the validity of this freedom to test after test, as if they themselves doubted it existed. But the question of Red China—call it Communism in action—is a poor testing ground.

The problem of Red China and Communism and Russia and Red infiltration has been on an adult level—that is, the persons who have the authority to combat it legally and morally. If the conservative adults feel that the problem is not yet read to be dumped into the laps of college students—who are struggling to reach the true adult maturity whether they will assert this lowly position or not—then they are justified in their decisions.

There will always be a battle between the liberals and conservatives and The Nebraskan hopes for the preservation of American freedom in which these battles take place. But if the two poles cannot meet and unite on the issue of Communism—condemning it in every possible way—then we cannot escape it. "United we stand, divided we fall"—Abraham Lincoln.—J. H.

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS

by Dick Bibler



I must tell a convincing story—I told him my father owns a big horse ranch."

Letterip

The Motive: Nationalism

Dear Editor:

In one of the short stories of Saki a lady has been shocked by the remarks of a youth and asks him: "Do you really think there is no boundary between good morals and bad?" She receives this answer: "Yes, of course there are moral boundaries, but they are like those of the Russian Empire, at one place one time and another place another time." To me this passage suggests the frame of mind with which a generation, that of Disraeli and Bismarck, met the threat of Russian expansionism. My suggestion, opposed by Mr. Sogandares-Bernal, that we should recognize "Red" China is entirely in sympathy with this attitude. It does not deserve the epithet "immature" nearly so well as the opposite view.

Russia is pursuing an imperialistic policy. That she seeks to dominate the areas which surround her for the purpose of unlimited imperialism is something we do not know but must assume for our own safety. The whole question is how to limit the growth of Russian power. Our natural allies in this policy are the nations that lie between us and Moscow. Eventually Russia will have to subjugate China and Germany or give up her hopes for world hegemony. This is a fact that neither of those nations can long ignore. It is the only principle upon which we may construct a successful foreign policy. Our cardinal principle should be: Do anything and everything which will strengthen and unite Germany and China. That a strong, united Germany

might revert to Nazism, that China should be dominated by a Communist regime is not terribly important. Neither could, by themselves, overthrow the status quo. To do so in concert with Russia would be to become resigned to the status of a client nation or worse.

Both China and Germany are primarily animated by a resurgent nationalism. This is a great positive force no matter what title it assumes. We can utilize it or disdain it. The latter has been our choice so far and it has been disastrous every step of the way. On the other hand we could play the benevolent role far better than the Russians for we have no designs on either Germany or China. It cannot escape the attention of the leaders of these countries that in the end Russia will have had her use of them and discard them. The device of a puppet government will not be necessary indefinitely.

GUY L. COOPER III.

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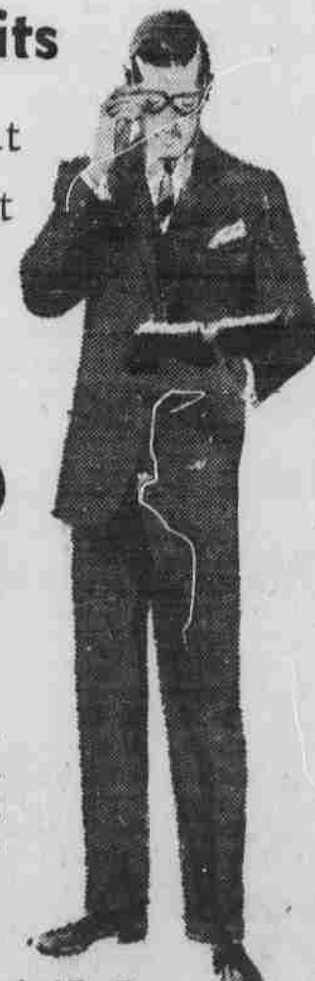
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This Is It... Or Is It?

Columnist Suggests Individual Inventory

By CYNTHIA HENDERSON

Students received a sharp reminder Saturday that old Time was marching along this semester, as is customary. Also, as customary, that old measuring stick of minutes and hours has been ticking away steadily without our notice.

However, the leaves have now fallen and the first white flakes are appearing. Suddenly we realize we are nearly at the halfway mark in our first semester. Hardly without our realization Rush Week hit and bid, new students were welcomed and are now just regular members of campus circles and are being treated with the usual indifference given to the Old Guard.

Also, the AUF drive has come and gone, the drinking "problem" has been happily overshadowed by conversations applauding football victories. We have changed from a school with internal football strife to a unified community now even hopefully contemplating a trip to Miami. And today, even the national election is history.

Where does all this whirling of events leave us? Right at present it leaves most of us behind a stack of unsold books trying to meet Wednesday's and Friday's and next Tuesday's test.

Tests, also, have arrived suddenly without our acute awareness of their creeping closer. Whether we will be able to meet these tests and following ones will depend largely on what we have been accomplishing in these weeks which have slipped by so swiftly.

Now, as at least one columnist must say every year, is a good time for us to take inventory. Have I accomplished those goals

I set for myself this year? Or, did I even set any goals? How many Ec and Poli Sci weekly reviews have I given to myself, as I promised? My obligations to the groups to which I belong, have they been performed promptly and cheerfully? Am I really on the road to progress this year?

The next few weeks will undoubtedly pass as quickly as the last eight. Election returns will upset or fill the Republicans' basket in Congress. President Eisenhower will give his Thanksgiving message. The final curtain will fall on the next University Theatre play. Dates will be called, escorted and taken home after Fred Waring's concert. Turkeys will cease gobbling and will be gobbled. Even sleigh bells will ring and school bells will sound the fading gong until after Christmas holidays and New Year's hangovers. Then, we will ask ourselves again, where does all this whirling of events leave us?

Chances are, when it comes time for our second inventory, we will be left on a much higher rung of accomplishment if we think seriously now and take careful stock of our accomplishments to date, striving even for more hours of study, extra readings, careful performance of duties in the coming weeks.

So . . . this is it . . . or is it?

On Campus with Max Shalman

(Author of "Barefoot Boy With Cheek," etc.)

HOME, SWEET HOMECOMING

A great number of people have been asking me lately, "What is Homecoming?" Yesterday, for example, as I walked from my house to the establishment of Mr. Sigafos, the local lepidopterist where I had left a half dozen luna moths to be mounted—a distance of no more than three blocks—I was asked that well over a thousand people stopped me and said, "What is Homecoming?"

Well, what with company coming for dinner and the cook down with a recurrence of backbone fever, I could not tarry to answer their questions. "Read my column next week," I cried to them. "I'll tell all about Homecoming." With that I brushed past and raced home to baste the mallard and apply poultices to the cook, who, despite my unending ministrations, expired quietly during the night, a woman in her prime, scarcely 108 years old. Though her passing grieved me, it was some satisfaction to be able to grant her last wish—to be buried at sea—which is no small task when you live in Pierre, South Dakota.

With the dinner guests fed and the cook laid to her watery rest, I put out the cat and turned to the problem of Homecoming.

First of all, let us define Homecoming. Homecoming is a weekend when old graduates return to their alma maters to see a football game, ingest great quantities of food and drink, and inspect each other's bald spots.

This occasion is marked by the singing of old songs, the slapping of old backs, and the frequent utterance of such outcries as "Harry, you old polecat!" or "Harry, you old rooster!" or "Harry, you old wombat!" or "Harry, you old mandrill!" All old grads are named Harry.

During Homecoming the members of the faculty behave with unaccustomed animation. They laugh and smile and pound backs and keep shouting, "Harry, you old retriever!" These unbecoming actions are performed in the hope that the old grads, in a transport of bonhomie, will endow a new geology building.

The old grads, however, are seldom seduced. By game time on Saturday, their backs are so sore, their eyes so bleary, and their livers so sluggish that it is impossible to get a kind word out of them, much less a new geology building. "Hmph!" they snort as the home team completes a 101 yard march to a touchdown. "Call that football? Why, back in my day they'd have been over on the first down. By George, football was football back in those days—not this namby pamby girls game that passes for football today. Why, look at that bench. Fifty substitutes sitting there! Why, in my day, there were eleven men on a team and that was it. When you broke a leg, you got taped up and went right back in. Why, I remember the big game against State. Harry Wallaby, our star quarterback, was killed in the third quarter. I mean he was pronounced dead. But did that stop old Harry? Not on your tinsy! Back in he went and kicked the winning drop-kick in the last four seconds of play, dead as he was. Back in my day, they played football, by their day—everything except one. Even the most unreconstructed of the old grads has to admit that back in his day they never had a smoke like today's vintage Philip Morris—never anything so mild and pleasing, day in day out, at study or at play, in sunshine or in shower, on grassy bank or musty taproom, afoot or ashore, at home or abroad, any time, any weather, anywhere.

I take up next another important aspect of Homecoming—the decorations in front of the fraternity house. Well do I remember one Homecoming of my undergraduate days. The game was against Princeton. The Homecoming slogan was "Hold That Tiger!" Each fraternity house built a decoration to reflect that slogan, and on the morning of the game a group of dignitaries toured Fraternity Row to inspect the decorations and award a prize for the best.

The decoration chairman at our house was an enterprising young man named Rex Sigafos, nephew of the famous lepidopterist. Rex surveyed Fraternity Row, came back to our house and said, "All the other houses are building cardboard cages with cardboard tigers inside of them. We need to do something different—and I've got it. We're going to have a real cage with a real tiger inside of it—a snarling, clawing, slashing, real live tiger!"

"Criskey!" we breathed. "But where will you get him?"

"Well sir, you can imagine what a sensation it was on Homecoming morning. The judges drove along nodding politely at cardboard tigers in cardboard cages and suddenly they came to our house. No sham beasts in a sham cage here! No sir! A real tiger in a real cage—a great striped jungle killer who snarled and roared and snarled and dashed himself against the bars of his cage with maniacal fury.

There can be no doubt that we would have easily taken first prize had not the tiger knocked out the bars of the cage and leaped into the official car and devoured Mr. August Schlemmer, the governor of the state, Mr. Wilson Ardsley Devereaux, president of the university, Dr. O. P. Gramsire, author of *A Treasury of the World's Great Southpaws: An Anthology of Left Hand Literatures*, Mr. Harrison J. Teed, commissioner of weights and measures, Mrs. Amy Dorr Nesbit, inventor of the clarinet, Mr. Jarrett Thrum, world's 135 pound lacrosse champion, Mr. Peter Bennett Hough, editor of the literary quarterly *Spoon*, and Mrs. Ora Wells Anthony, first woman to tunnel under the North Platte River.

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The Nebraskan

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